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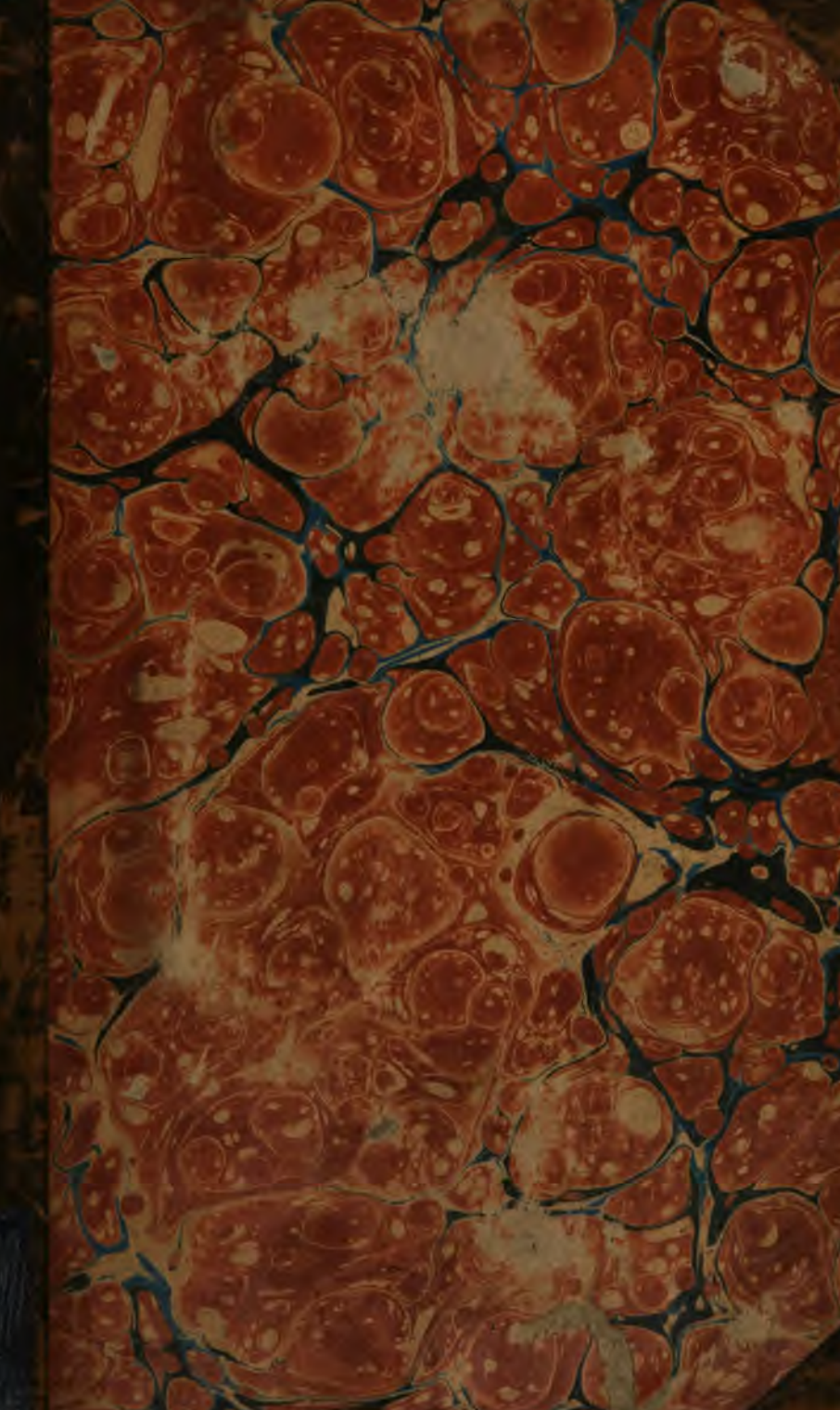
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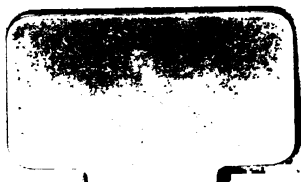
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Malone. B. 94.



Malone. B. 94.



THE
CHESHIRE HUNTRESS,
AND THE
Old Fox caught at Last,
A
DRAMATIC TALE.

Propria quæ Maribus tribuuntur Mascula dicas.

LILY.

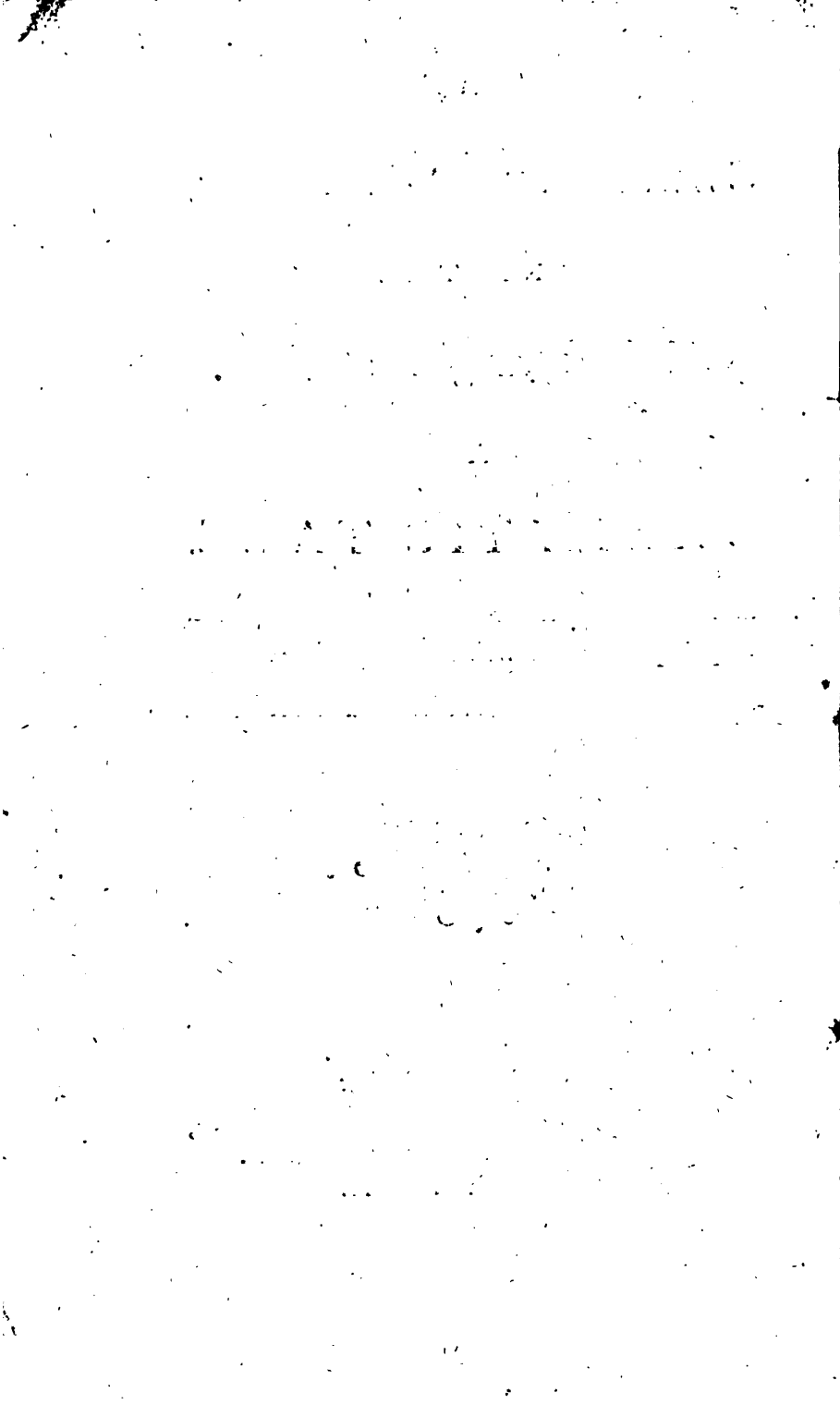
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PROLOGUE.

Intended to be spoken in Favour of the
AUTHOR.

I'M come to let you know our Author's Case;
For Authors dare not always shew their Face.
*Alas! poor Scribbler, he is quite obscur'd,
Unknown to lib'ral Hearts what he's endur'd.
Much Cole has been distributed and given,
But his Dependance is, O hone! on Heaven.
Some Days o'er frozen Thames, midst Ice and Sleet,
He's walk'd to view the * Fair with chilblain'd Feet,
Waiting the lucky Day, when he shou'd eat:
Thence to the Abby he wou'd scud away,
To view the Tombs of Poets gone to Clay,
And warm him at the Bust of honest Gay.
Then Westward in the Park he's took a Bait,
With counting Trees, and seeing People skait.
I hope Jack R——h will never gain his Ends,
To damn this Rural Farce for want of Friends,
Ye Sons of Cheshire, to a Man unite,
And raise a Voice above the hissing Spite.
If on our Author's Side the Shout should go,
His Gratitude to all he'd humbly shew;
Invite each Brother of Parnassus Hill,
Of Drury Mutton-Pyes to eat his Fill,
And at † Blew-Potts free Cost shall Porter swill.
And he that won't assist a Man distress'd,
Here, nor hereafter neither will be bless'd.*

[Going off and returns.

He might have said he values not your Spleen,
But that he's much too tall for a Marine.

* Frost-Fair was kept on the Thames, at Whitehall.

† A House in Ruffel-Street noted for good Beer, and much frequented by Authors and Players.

DRAMATIS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

Sir *John Foxchace*, a Country Gentleman and Sportsman.

Sir *Credulous Plyant*, }
Sir *Thomas Cavalier*, } Neighbours to Sir *John*.

Young *Foxchace*, Son to Sir *John*.

1 }
2 } Country Gentlemen and Sportsmen.
3 }
4 }

Speculum, one who pretends to understand Astrology, tell Fortunes, and help People to recover lost Cattle.

Stote, Servant to *Speculum*.

Ephraim, }
and } Servants to a Farmer.
Robin, }

W O M E N.

Lady *Cavalier*, Wife to Sir *Thomas*.

Mrs. *Loveit*, an old Gentlewoman, married to her fourth Husband.

Clamira, a rich young Heiress, who takes Delight to ride a Hunting, in Love with young *Foxchace*.

Miss *Fidget*, a Relation to Sir *Thomas*.

Chambermaid, Cook, Coachman, Footman,
Countrymen, Butcher, Servants, &c.

SCENE in CHESHIRE.



T H E
C H E S H I R E H U N T R E S S :
A N D T H E
Old Fox caught at Last.

A C T I S C E N E I.

SCENE *a Hall in Sir John Foxchace's House. Several Gentlemen in Hunting Dresses. A Table with lighted Candles.*

Enter CLAMIRA in a Riding Habit, singing.

O *N E* Valentine's Day in the Morning bright,
Phœbus began to appear:—

A good Day to you, Gentlemen ; I suppose you're
all the Company we shall have to compose the
String for the Day's Sport.

1 Gent. I presume we are ; but the Pleasure of
your Presence, Madam, gives Life to a Chace.

Clam. Sir John then is not for the Exercise this
hazy Morning ?

2 Gent. Yes, *Clamira*, he will join us ; but for
his Son *Jack*, I hear there is an Embargo laid on
him.

B

Clam.

2 *The CHESHIRE HUNTERS.*

Clam. How so?

2 *Gent.* It has been rumour'd that he rides too bold for his Safety.

Clam. A Sportsman too bold? impossible!

2 *Gent.* As he is an only Child, and the Hopes of the Family, his Father has thought it requisite that he shou'd give over the Sport, at least for this Season.

Clam. Then I shall find an Excuse to leave you. [*Aside.*] But is not that a poor Reason, That because a Lad is endow'd with Courage, he shou'd not be bred a Soldier?

1 *Gent.* That Method may be agreeable enough to the Times. But perhaps the Order may be countermanded.

2 *Gent.* This Account don't please her. [*Aside.*

Clam. Well, Gentlemen, I'm not for losing Time, the Day hastes on apace.

1 *Gent.* Sir John will be down presently.

Clam. [*Aside.*] These Fellows are Spies upon my Behaviour, I suppose.—I'll call him. So so, Sir John, Sir John, *Tan tarra, tan tarra, tan tarra*.--- I am resolv'd *Jackey* shall know I am come, I'll endeavour to warm his Inclination. [*Aside.*

Sir JOHN enters half dress'd, with one Boot on, a Footman following him with the other.

Sir John. How now, my young *Diana*! you are ever the earliest, loudest, and readiest to undergo the Fatigue of a Chace.

Clam. Fatigue, *Sir John*? I believe you ne'er thought it a Fatigue to follow Hounds; and for my Part, of all the Pleasures that Woman was ever born to enjoy, none comes up to't.

Sir John. Her Mother's Child to a Truth!

Clam.

and the Old Fox caught at last. 3.

Clam. I am pleas'd that no more of my Sex have tasted it, for now I can engross the Sport of the whole County.

Sir John. The greatest Proof of that is your early rising.

Clam. Who wou'd mind Time, or Hours, when to partake of what they love?

Sir John. This seems to confirm my Suspicion,--she is in Love with Jack. [*Aside.*] 'Tis too coarse an Exercise for your Sex.

Clam. No, no, sportive Exercise warms the Blood, cheers the Mind, enlivens all our noble Faculties, and sets the whole Frame in Motion. [*To 2 Gent.*] Why so thoughtful, Sir? Say you, Do any Pleasures which you have tasted, Brother Sportsman, come up to a Fox-Chace?

2 Gent. Truly, Girl, none upon Earth; not even Women are to be put in Competition with a Pack of staunch Dogs. I'll affront her, if I can. [*Aside.*]

Clam. Heavens preserve me! here's a Fellow. [*To 1 Gent.*] And what say you, Sir?

1 Gent. Nothing comes so near it as Matrimony.

Clam. Ha! Sure they mistrust our Intentions! [*Aside.*] Matrimony! Ha, ha, ha, I thought you was married---makes you so pensive. Well! that is the last Thing I should have thought of, and the only one in my Mind that wou'd put a Damp to an Inclination to every other Pleasure.

Sir John. Do you really speak as you think, *Clamira*?

Clam. Ay, Sir John, I do, indeed;--and, Sir, I have sworn to myself a thousand Times that I would never marry.

Sir John. Say you so?

4 *The CHESHIRE HUNTRESS,*

Clam. Indeed ! I would not give myself the Liberty to think on't. What a terrible Lye is that ?

[*Aside.*

Sir John, Nay, then my Boy shall go out with us this Morning. [*Aside.*] Gentlemen, let me speak a Word or two with you. [*walking at a Distance.*

Clam. So ; my Scheme will take, I find. [*All come forward.* *Clamira hums to herself,*

And all the Day long—

Sir John to Gent. Gentlemen, let me request of you, to go in a Body to my poor Boy, and cheer his Heart ; tell him he may go with us.

All. We will obey your Orders.— [*They go.*

Sir John. Bid him get ready in a Minute. So, all is safe ! tho' I really thought that my Son Jack had been the only Game which brought her here so early and so frequent to join the Chace. [*Aside.*] But *Clamira*, may I, without offending, ask one serious Question ?

Clam. Ay, a thousand, Sir, if you please.— Every Question will produce a Lye, I'm afraid.

[*Aside.*

Sir John. Was you ever in Love ? or have you been cross'd, and taken these Resolutions since for Revenge ?

Clam. So, the Old Gentleman is upon his pump with me yet. [*Aside.*] Why, really, 'Sir, to speak the plain and downright Truth, I never was, or ever will be in Love, except with Dogs and Horses.

Sir John. Agreeable ! i'faith you are a Girl after my own Heart ! Come, give an old Sportsman a Kiss.

Clam. That I will, *Sir John*, since 'tis your Request—But I assure you I had rather give a Kiss to my Horse. [*Offers to kiss him.*] Hold !

But

and the old Fox caught at last. 3

But will you promise me to return it to me on Demand?

Sir John. I will, with an Addition for Interest,
[[*She kisses him.*

Clam. There——Now, what do you really think of me? am not I of true game Breed?

Sir John. Her Breath is as sweet as a young Fawn's. [Aside.

Clam. Come, don't study what to say.

Sir John. Why, really, to speak my Mind, I think thou art an odd Compound; but however, don't be drawn into Matrimony, Girl; be wary: For I had taken such Resolutions when young; but once, ah, fatal Time! And then I was as unfortunately drawn into the Net as ever Fellow was; and I cannot say but I have been Master of many a Horse and Dog too, which I have loved almost as well as my Wife, and kiss'd them as often. [Pulls on the other Boot.

Clam. A True Sportsman, indeed. I hope your Son won't follow your Example. [Aside.

[BRIDGET peeps. CLAMIRA steps backwards and receives from her a Letter. She sings to herself, and reads it.]

Sir John. And you really never had a Leaning towards Man, *Clamira*?

Clam. Not I, good Truth: For I think that half the Species of Mankind are mere Carrion, and fit for nothing but Hounds Meat.

Sir John. Ha, ha, Hounds Meat! I wish my Boy *Jack* had been here to have heard that Saying. But then you have a Liking to some of the Sex; they are but half of 'em Hounds Meat and Carrion.——What dost think of my *Jack*? a brave, fresh, ruddy Boy; speak truly, is not he?

Clam.

6 *The* CHESHIRE HUNTERS,

Clam. [*Aside.*] My Heart won't permit me to speak against him. [*Sighs.*]

Sir John. Come, don't hesitate. ———

Clam. Think of your Son, *Sir John*? ———

Sir John. Ay, my Son, Madam!

Clam. Why think, I think he is a very eager Sportsman; and to be plainer, *Sir John*, I shou'd not care to be unhorsed and he present.

Sir John. Why so, Madam, *Jack* is a Gentleman, and wou'd set you decently into the Saddle again, I'll warrant.

Clam. A Man who would not do that is neither Gentleman nor Sportsman, tho' I'm assured that he is both.

Sir John. Ay, that he is; and a good Sportsman always gives Game Law.

Clam. That's right; and then, when the Game is run down 'tis all fair.

Sir John. Adod, Girl, thou art of the truest Breed in the County of *Cheshire*; for your Father ever abhorrd a Poacher, and I think my Boy *Jack* is staunch as any in *Vale Royal*; and tho' I lay it, has the Heart of a Lion when in pursuit of the Game.

Clam. True: For he takes the most desperate Leaps; I'm sure he has made my Heart ach many a Time to follow him.

Sir John. Why, that's not a bad Resemblance: For I have taken pretty forward Leaps in my Time. ——— But, *Clamira*, I observed you said, his Leaps had made your Heart ach, and, I presume, that was for fear he should fall.

Clam. [*Aside.*] You have hit it indeed: Nay, *Sir John*, I once more assure you, that no Fellow's Misfortunes wou'd affect me; but ———

Sir

and the old Fox caught at last.

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Sir John. Really, *Clamira*, the young Spark has rid so venturesome for some Time past, that I had by Advice given Orders that he should quit the Sport; for as he is my *All*, you know that a Fall from his Horse might remove my Estate into bad Hands.—— But, however, I have countermanded that Order, and he is getting ready to set out with us.

Clam. [*Aside.*] Oh the joyful News! I think, *Sir John*, I shall be well mounted to Day: For I am very desirous to be at the Death of a Fox.

Sir John. What, hast parted with *Merry Tom*?

Clam. No; nor will I ever part with him for my dear Mother's Sake,—and therefore have set out on my Father's Horse *Stiff Dick*.

Sir John. Courage to Perfection! A most excellent Horse he is. But, *Clamira*, take an old Stager's Advice, for your Family's Sake: Your Father I loved most dearly.

Clam. Proceed, *Sir John*, I am ever ready to hearken to the Advice of a Friend. More Suspicion.

[*Aside.*]

Sir John. If ever you should inadvertently have a Leaning towards Matrimony,—call up your Resolution and keep it strong; *strong* against a Sportsman! Ah, they are sad Fellows to their Wives!

Clam. A Sportsman and a Soldier are the only Men in Life I have a real Hatred to; for they leave all their Courage in the Field.

Sir John. And what are they good for at Home? not much.

Clam. But a Sportsman is the worst of all. I shall have no Luck for telling so many Lyes to-day.

[*Aside.*]

Sir John. So, now I am easy. [*Aside.*] Why, ay, in good Truth, to consider rightly, what is

2

a Sportsman? a Hound-follower; one who wou'd get out of a warm Bed at four o' Clock in a cold Morning, and quit the Arms of a sweet young Wife, to follow the Yelping of a Pack of Dogs. Ah, Girl, I have seen the Folly on't, and like your Resolution.

Clam. Well! now I hope my Lesson is done. [*Aside.*] Fie on such Fellows, to offer to marry, when they know that all these Infirmities are rivetted to them.

Sir John. [*Aside.*] So, I have done the Job!

Clam. I wish they would all take the same Resolution that I have, to live single, and then they wou'd by Authority be as merry as I.---[*She walks about and sings.*]

The sweet Rosy Morning peeps over the Hills,---

Enter BRIDGET with warm Wine; sets it on a Table; whispers with CLAMIRA.

Sir John. That Air confirms that all which has has been buzz'd in my Ears about my Son and her is false and groundless: For altho' her Family and Fortune is superior to his, yet methinks I would not have my Boy worn out at once: Married to one who dresses like a Masquerader, and takes delight in leaping Ditches and five-bar Gates. A rampant Wife, and a rampant Husband, adod, if they were to come together, I believe they wou'd beget a Breed of Tygers. If I had such a one, my whole Estate wou'd scarcely support the Hounds. However, my Boy may do as he will with her, so he don't marry her. [*Aside.*

[*Clamira comes forward. A Horn blown without.*]

Clam. Come, come, *Sir John*, don't you hear? Hark --- To there, my little Gypsies. *The merry merry Horn cries, come come ---*

Sportsmen

and the old Fox caught at last.

9

Sportsmen return with young FOXCHACE.

Y. Foxc. Hark too, my little *Dido*, hark too there.---Madam, your most obedient.-----

2 Gent. So, pretty Lady! you are are very chearful this Morning.

Clam. As usual, Sir, my Heart is ever open to the Sound of that I love.---

Servant enters with Glasses.

Sir John. Serve a Glas round, and then to Horse.

[*Horn blown without.*

Clam. Come Gentlemen, Success to the Day.

[*Drinks. All drink round. Huntsman without, Away, away.*]

All. Away, away, we'll crown the Day.---

SCENE Changes. A Parlour.

Sir JOHN's Coachman, Footman, Cook, and Chambermaid.

Coachm. A Fair Riddance. --- Well! of all the Places I ever yet lived in, this is the worst; a pox on the Hounds squaling and yelping.---

Footm. And so say I, for I stink like a Polecat every Day when I wait at Table, and my Master likes me the better for't; but I'm sure I have lost a deal of Vails by it.

Coachm. In other Places where I have lived, 'twas enough for me that I look'd to my Coach-Horses; but here the Dogs are all that are enquired after.

Cook. Ay, *Jonas*, thou art in the right on't; this House is a perfect Dog-kennel; I can see no one respected in it but the Dogs: For the Minute I am out of my Nest, whip my old Master or my young one is at my Elbow, to know if

C

the

the Dogs have had their Breakfast. But egad I'll go the 'Pothecary for 'em.

Footm. Ay, do so, *Susan*. Serve 'em as my Lady served my young Master's Setting-Dog some time ago.

Cook. How was that?

Footm. Ah lack, don't you know, that the young Squire had given five Guineas to have a Dog broke for a Setter, and the first Day that he came home from Boarding-School, my old Lady gave me a Shilling to hang him?

Cook. Adad, I wou'd my Lady wou'd give me a Shilling a Piece to serve all the Hounds so.

Footm. Ah, that she wou'd, a Guinea if she dared, poor Lady; and if they were served so, how glorious might we Servants live! And as to the Cocking, that indeed is none of our Business.

Coachm. If the Hounds had run their last, we Servants might lie in Bed of a cold Morning and enjoy ourselves.

Cook. Ay, and enjoy one another too, that we might: For, tho' I say it, who am but a Servant, there is no Pleasure comes up to a warm Bed in a cold Morning.—But, *Mrs. Bridget*, what call'd you up so early this cold Morning? You Chambermaids can have no Business with the Hounds, I'm sure.

Bridget. So, *Mrs. Cook*, tho' my Business is not with the Hounds, yet my Business is with the Hounds Masters,—and to get them something warm before they set out in a cold Morning.

Cook. Indeed I think all the warm Business of right belongs to the Cook: But you have delivered the young Squire a rare warm Letter this Morning; it set aside all his Melancholy; and I saw him likewise make you pretty easy, if Money

and the Old Fox caught at last. 11

ney would do it. There *Bridget*, take that Purse and what is in it, and tell *Clamira*, if you have an Opportunity, I will be punctual to her Orders!—— Why, *Bridget*, we little *Faries* can creep into small Crevices.

Bridg. And what then? pray do you mind your Kitchin Affairs.

Cook. So I will, and will let my Lady know the whole Secret the Minute she comes down Stairs.

Bridg. Will you so! Ay, and that will be too late; for she don't rise till twelve, and they will be married by eleven, I hope. [*Aside.*] But Madam Dish-washer, methinks you take a great Prerogative out of your own Tarritories.——Pray what Business have you in this Parlour?

Footm. Nay, nay, since you come to that Mrs. *Bridget*, you have no Right here yourself, this is my Parlour.

Cook. No, Madam Frippery, no more you ha'nt.

Bridg. My Master's House is finely divided among you Servants.

Coachm. Come, come, Servants shou'd never be at Variance one with another; they ought always to hold together for the Benefit of themselves. The Quarrels of Servants can be a Benefit to none but their Masters and Mistresses; and I'm sure 'tis no Servant's Business to forward it.

Footm. Then, I say, let us all agree together for the Benefit of ourselves, ——and adjourn to the Kitchin, and make up a rousing Fire; sit round it, and then like honest Boys and Girls soak our Noses with two Bottles a-piece of the best Wine in the Cellar; and that shall be my Treat. [*Strutting.*

Cook. Garramarcy Boy! and honestly spoken. And I will provide such a Feast of Poultry, Ragout, and Wild Fowl, as Sir *John* never saw at his Table in his Life.

Coachm. And so make up all Animositities with luxurious Living.

Bridg. Well, I believe 'tis best to comply, and join in the Treat, 'till my Master comes home, when he shall have a Bill of Fare of his Servants Breakfast. [*Aside.*] Ay, with all my Heart.

Footm. Come along then; and let us be as sportive at Home as they are Abroad.

All. Ay, ay, come along——— *Toll der roll toll.*——— [*Go out Hand in Hand.*]

SCENE Changes. A Farmer's Yard.

EPHRAIM enters with a lighted Candle in his Hands.

Ephr. **W**HAT a Confusion have we had to-night; egad there has been main slaying amongst the Poultry. [*Calling aloud.*] Why *Robin*, an' be pox'd to you. He is like our Horse *Drone*, when Business is to be done, 'e will always sneak his Neck out o'the Collar. Why *Robin*! Good truth, this *Christmas* Ale makes all the Servants sleep like Town Tops; I'faith I'll try him. Z-----ds, the House may be fired, and he burn'd in the midst on't 'ere he would stir an Inch; but if one offer to buss *Margery*, then he's nimble enough both with Hands and Heels too.——— Why *Margery*.— If that don't wake him I'm mista'en.—Now, if Maister shou'd hear.

ROBIN enters in his Waistcoat rubbing his Eyes.

Rob. What's matter *Ephraim*?

Epb.

Eph. 'Smatter, 'smatter enough ! Why, there has been such Disasters and Squaling 'mong the Poultry to-night wou'd ha' scar'd Old Nick. Why, didst not hear 'em?

Rob. Not I, fegguns ; nor had I heard you if *Margery* had not waked me.—Ah lack, what han I said ? [*Aside.*

Eph. Oh ho, did she so. Odds budlikins, what Mischief might I ha' done.-----

Rob. Ay, your calling so loud. — Well, well ; but what's happen'd to the Poultry ?

Eph. Happen'd ? ah most barbarous Doings ! Why, if you were to go into the Roosthouse, you'd swear that the *Wild Irish* had been there.

Rob. Ay, they do most plaguely filch when they first come over here in *Cheshire*.

Eph. Ay, but he was not of that Breed, tho'I have laid the old mischievous Dog as strait as an Arrow.

Rob. Why, what hast done Murder, *Ephraim* ?

Eph. Murder, ay I have, if killing a plaguy old Fox be Murder ; tho' I did not do it in the Heat of Passion ; I was pretty merciful to him.

Rob. How so ?

Eph. I let him stuff his Paunch ; egad, *Robin*, his Belly is now as stretch'd as our brindle Cow's Dugs.

Rob. What he had fill'd his Belly so full 'e cou'd not get out at the Hole 'e came in at. Statesman like, ! i'faith.

Eph. I'faith, I believe he cou'd not ; for he was down on his Marrow-bones when I stuck the Pitchfork into his Guts. Prythee come and look on him, for he looks now like a Hare made ready for the Spit with a Pudding stuffed into his Belly ; but 'e stinks like a Fitchet.—Come, come along and see him ; the Dog has kept *Christmas* as well as we.—Come, come along.---- [*Hawling him.*

Rob.

Rob. Hold, hold, *Ephraim*, not so hasty; I shan't draw myself into a Scrape, I assure you; I know the Law too well for that; for I have been Postillion to a Justice o'Peace.—But pr'ythee *Ephraim*, by whose Authority did you commit this Murder on the Fox?

Eph. By whose Authority, why, by my own Authority, and our Maister's Authority.

Rob. Ah, that won't do in Law, *Ephraim*!

Eph. Pray let me ask you a Question, since you come to that. By whose Authority did he come here, to devour our Poultry? There I have you again, now.

Rob. Not so hasty, *Ephraim*, not so hasty! --- For a Fox in Law is what is called Game, and the Game you know is invi'lable and must be preserved; and so if you destroy the Game, *bonus notius*, you destroy one of his Majesty's Subjects.

Eph. Ah lack! ah lack! I always took you to be a wise Man till now. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! A Fox one of his Majesty's Subjects? Ha, ha, ha.

Rob. Thou Nidgeot, — Only in the Eye of the Law. —

Eph. Now you talk like our Justice o'Peace, with your Condrums to frighten People. But *Robin*, does his Majesty suffer any of these Fox-Subjects to come near his Court?

Rob. P'sha, thou Auff, don't thee trouble thyself with State Affairs. Game is Game all the Kingdom over, and there is Game at Court as well as ev'ry where else; but i'faith I believe there ar'nt so many Foxes there of late Years as there are in *Cheshire*.

Eph. But, *Robin*, suppose now a Fox was a Subject as you say, and this Subject came to rob me,
why

why then I killed him in my own Defence. Then there's your *bonus notius* again now.

Rob. Ay, *Ephraim*, now you talk with some Judgment ; but there is another bad Consequence that may attend this Affair.

Epb. You cunning Folk are always finding out new Means to perplex one ; ——— Well, what is that ?

Rob. Sir *John*, and the other sporting Gentlemen of the County, are coming this Way to un-kennel a Fox, and if this Fox should be the very Fox which they had pitch'd on for the Day's Sport, how then, *Ephraim*, how then !

Epb. How then ? why then, *Robin*, all that can be said is this : Why truly, that *Ephraim* has spoil'd their Sport.

Rob. But do you know the Law for that ?

Epb. Not I truly ; is there Law for that too ?

Rob. Yes there is, and a very severe one too.

Epb. I'faith you find Law for every Thing that you arn't concern'd in. Pry'thee tell me now.

Rob. You know Sir *John* is Lord of the Manor, a Justice o'th'Peace, and our Member of Parliament ; so in Fact, if you cannot pay down five Pounds for destroying the Game, in this Case, the Law says, you must be committed to Prison, and next, you must stand in the Pillory on three Market Days.

Epb. Oh lay, oh lay ! --- Why, who the Devil made that Law ?

Rob. Hold your Tongue, Sirrah ! those very Words I cou'd prove to be High Treason, if I had a Mind to be spiteful.

Epb. Nay, *Robin*, why wou'd not you tell me of this before ? --- But pray now, since you come to that,

that, What Law is there for breaking down Fences?

Rob. Why do'st ask that, *Ephraim*?

Eph. Because I have a Hank upon Sir *John* and all his Crew, and I am an Evidence for Maister in this Case.

Rob. How so?

Eph. Why, I heard Maister say, that he wou'd go to Law with Sir *John*, and the rest of the sporting Gentlemen; for the last Hunting-Day they laid all the Closures into open Field. You know that yourself now.——

Rob. Ay, and so they may.---Did not I tell you Sir *John* was a Member of Parliament?

Eph. Well! what then! have all Members of Parliament the Liberty to break down Fences?

Rob. Ay, sure, he who gave his Vote to form them into Closures, may by the same Authority lay them open again when he has a Mind to't.

Eph. Ay there indeed; but good Mr. *Robert* stand my Friend now in this Case, and think of some Law o' my Side, for I hate the Thoughts o' the Pillory.

Rob. Hast got Money, *Ephraim*? Money and Law always go together, and Councils Fees must be paid.

Eph. I'faith for Money, I han't above your Shillings i'the 'versal World, and thou shalt have that with all my Heart.

Rob. Well, *Ephraim*, I will assist thee, and the first Thing you must do, convey the Fox out of the Way before the Hounds get hither; for if they shou'd set on the Scent then you are betray'd at once;--but if so, we must say the Dogs kill'd him.

Eph. Ay, that is bad Counsel indeed. Why he is as cold as a Clod.——*Robin*, suppose I was to throw him into the Well?

Rob.

and the Old Fox caught at last. 17

Rob. No, that will not do, for all the Dogs wou'd break their Necks after it.

Epb. Where shou'd I be then? For Sir *John* had rather half the Folk in the Parish shou'd break their Necks than his Hounds.

[*A Horn blown at a Distance, and Dogs open.*]
Ah Lard! here they come, dear *Robin!* stand by me, and don't let one come to the Pillory.

Rob. Haste away then.

Epb. Ah, the Pillory,---the Pillory!---

[*A Pack of Hounds heard at a Distance.*]

SCENE *changes to a Room.*

Enter young Foxchace and Clamira.

Y. Foxc. **W**ELL, my Dear, Fortune has assist-
ed us at a Pinch, for there was no
Hopes of finding a Fox, but the Dogs set smartly
on the Scent, and hit off a Hare. They are in
full Cry, and the Company ride briskly; she will
lead them on, I believe, for she bounc'd off strong
as a Buck.

Clam. Every Token seems to me propitious.
Heaven lend it so! [*Sing.*]

Y. Foxc. *While Hearts are uniting,
And Parents are slighting,
By striving to ruffle our Joys;*

Clam. *When Fathers are sending,
Contriving and mending,
To patch up rich Wives for their Boys;*

Y. Foxc. *We'll let them provide,
We have turned the Tide;*

18 *The* **C H E S H I R E H U N T R E S S,**

So bere is my Hand and my Heart :
Clam. *Our Loves have no Bounds,*
 While they follow the Hounds,
 We'll tie up and never will part.
Both. *We'll tie up and never will part.*

Enter a Gentleman, and Friend to Young Foxchace.

Gent. My dear Friend, I have made all ready ;
step forward in a Minute, lest we shou'd be surpriz'd 'ere the Ceremony be concluded.

[Exit running.]

S C E N E *changes.*

An outward Room in Speculum's House. A Table, wheron are standing Globes, Books, a Magick Lant-born, Mathematical Instruments, &c. SPECULUM and STOTE walking about.

Spec. **W**ELL, *Stote*, I think yesterday was a pretty lucky Day, considering 'tis Winter-time.

Stote. Ay, that's like your Conjuraction now : Why this is the best Quarter in all the Year for thieving ; and this Holliday-Week is better than all the rest. Do you think I cou'd have gotten Sir *Credulous Plyant's* Mare out of the Stable last Night, if the Servants had not been all drunk ?

Spec. That was a Mistake of mine.

Stote. The poor Beast stepp'd as leisurely over the Groom, who lay under her in the Straw, as if he himself had been leading her to Water ; and we shall have some drunken Fellow to inquire for her presently.

Spec. There are no Customers this Morning,
Stote.

Stote.

Stote. Patience; why 'tis hardly Day-light, and you know no one in this County will venture themselves in our House by Candle-light. Beside, People have not had Time to look o'er their Cattle, to see what they have lost.

Spec. Od, Stote, Sir Thomas Cavalier came down very handsomely yesterday, when I persuaded him that he was not a Cuckold; but I believe I told a plaguety Lye; for the Tale was so plain,--a Man in Bed with her too.

Stote. Hold your Tongue, for my Lady will come to-day perhaps, and then you will have twice as much of her, for Hush-money. ———

[Knocking at the Door.

Come away, get you up Stairs. [He goes. *Stote opens the Door.*]

Countryman enters.

Countrym. I prea now, does Doctor Speculum live here?

Stote. Yes, he does.

C. Man. Is he at home?

Stote. He is, but very busy in his Study.

C. Man. Ah lack! what mun I do then?

Stote. Let me know your Business, and if 'tis easily done, I'll call him.

C. Man. Why, you must know, I have lost the finest Boar Pig in the whole County of Cheshire.

Stote. Aside.] Ha, that will make good Brawn this Christmas.---A Boar! why, that, I suppose, properly speaking, may be called a Hog.---So I'll ring the Hog-Bell. [*Aside. Rings.*] And how long have you lost this Hog?

C. Man. But yesterday. [*He turns a Globe about.*] Why the Doctor must be a most wonderful Genus, and a great Extrologer. I prea, what mun these Things be for?

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Stote. For! To raise the Devil; let them alone.

C. Man. Ah, Lard preserve us! I am glad you told me. [*Sneaks off, and stands in a Corner frighted.*]

SPECULUM enters.

Spec. So, honest Man, what you have lost your Hog.

C. Man. Ah, wonderful! --- [*trembling*] Ay, I have, indeed.

Spec. Well, Friend, pay my Man his Fee, and in the mean Time I'll see.---

[*Turning the Globes about.*]

C. Man. Oh, for Heaven's Sake! let me out first, and there is a Shilling for you. [*Exit.*]

Stote. I hope you'll call this getting Money easy. Ha, ha, ha.

Spec. What is the Meaning?

Stote. Ha, ha, ha! The Meaning! I told him those Globes were to raise the Devil, and so he was willing to get out before the Devil came. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Knocking hard at the Door.*]

Stote. Come, come; away Sir, away.

[*Knocking again.*]

Spec. Hold, hold, peep and see if 'tis not a Constable:—

[*They peep.*]

Stote. No, no, 'tis none but the Butcher.

[*Speculum goes. Stote opens the Door.*]

Butcher Enters.

Butch. Where is the Doctor, you Sir?

Stote. I don't half like this Fellow. [*Aside.*] Sir, ha?

Butch. Where is he, a conjuring Dog, ha? is not that *Englisch*!

Stote. I don't know whether 'tis or not; but I know what you come about.--- This is the Lamb-Bell.

Bell. [*Aside. Rings.*] Pray Sir please to sit down, the Doctor will wait on you in a Minute. The Wind is changed, I believe, and a Storm seems to rise. [*Aside.*] *Speculum enters.*

Spec. So, Neighbour, what you are come about your Lambs?

Butch. How the plague could you know that? They stole them themselves I suppose. [*Aside.*

Spec. Why, Neighbour, you will have them again in a little Time.

Butch. What, when they are grown to Mutton?

Spec. No, no; in a Day or two.—

Stote. I wou'd the greasy Dog was out of the House. [*Aside.*] You may depend upon having them again by that Time.

Butch. See you let me have them again by to-morrow night, or, when I come again, I'll knock your damn'd Globes about your Ears. [*Striking the Globes with a Stick.*] See you do. [*Goes.*

Stote. If you come in here again I'll be scarified. [*Making the Door fast.*

Spec. What Difference there is in Mankind? Talk of raising the Devil; why this butcherly Dog is a very Devil himself; what must be done with him?

Stote. You know his two Lambs are almost eaten up by this Time.

Spec. Well, *Stote*, let us place Profit and Loss together; you shall purchase two more with Sir Thomas's Money.

Stote. Hold, hold, Sir, I shall not comply with that; what, lessen the Bank Stock! No no, leave the Management of that to me. Directors of Companies never lessen Stock but to put into their own Pockets.

Spec. How will you do?

Stote.

Stote. I'll turn out at Night, steal two more from another Person, and place them into his Fold.

Spec. A good Thought, *Stote.* Ah, if I had but thy Head, what Money might we get! [*Knocking at the Door.*]

Stote. About your Business.— [*Spec. goes.*]

Sir CREDULOUS PLYANT enters.

Sir Credulous Plyant, I am your Honour's most obedient Servant.

Sir Cred. Where is your Master?

Stote. Above in his Study, Sir; but he will be very ready to wait upon you. [*Rings a Bell.*]
I hope your Honour has had no Loss.

Sir Cred. Ah, but I have! [*Speculum enters.*]
Doctor, your Servant, I'm come to gain Intelligence about a—.

Spec. Hold, hold, *Sir Credulous*, that's not the right Way to talk with one of our Faculty.— You shou'd have ask'd me if I had known what you came about.

Sir Cred. That is the craftiest Way indeed. Then pr'ythee Doctor, what is my Business with you?

Spec. Your Business with me?—Adad I have brought myself into a Scrape.— *Stote.*— Let me see.— Do you step up to my Turret, and lying by the Side of the equinoctial Quadrant, you will find my Calculations of last Night's Casualties,—bring 'em down Stairs; but don't so much as cast your Eye over them, 'tis dangerous.

Stote. I'll obey your Orders. Ay, this will do. [*Aside, going.*]

Spec. Act cautiously in so weighty an Affair; and be sure you don't meddle with those Schemes for the Calculations of Nativities. [*Stote goes.*]

Sir Cred. Is it a Part of your Business, Doctor, to calculate Nativities?

Spec.

Spec. It is a part of Business which I have lately peep'd into since the Decease of a learned Brother of the Faculty in *Holland*; and, Sir *Credulous*, I have great Encouragement in that Way from Abroad. Why, if I were to tell you what I know will shortly befall several crown'd Heads in *Europe*, ah Lord 'twou'd make you sweat to hear it: I have several Orders now from *Muscovy*, *Turkey*, *Sweden*, *Denmark*, *Germany*, *Italy*, *Spain*, *Holland*, *Corfica*, and *France*, and not one that wants to know their own Fortune, but all desirous to know the Fate of others; — pray let it be a Secret,—they are all afraid to know their own.—Be silent!

Sir Cred. Upon my Honour!

Spec. And I'm employ'd by no less than seven Foreign Princes to calculate the Nativity of one poor Subject of *France*.

Sir Cred. [*Whispers.*] What the Cardinal, I suppose.—Ha, a great Man he is.

Spec. Ay, and I can tell you, tho' a Statesman, he will die poor for the good of his Country.—'Isn't that wonderful?

STOTE enters, holding a Parchment over his Head.

Well done, *Stote*. Come, let me see it.———*Sir Credulous*, stand you there, and hold up your Head. I must not let him see 'tis only an old Lease of my House. [*Aside.*] Now I shall soon find what you came hither for. [*Looking on the Parchment.*] This Night has been the most *Mercurious* of any for some Months past; a dingey heavy Sleet hath fallen; pray Heaven we mayn't have many such! The superior Power of this Planet hath caused a general Robbing both by Sea and Land. The
Spaniards

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Spaniards have been robbing us of our Shipping ; the *French* have been robbing us of our Wooll and our Trade, and we have been robbing them of their Fashions. The *Germans* and *Dutch* of our Money ; and the *Irish* of our Wives and Daughters.

————Beware *Vale Royal* ! Ha, here it is. ———

You have lost out of your Stable last Night, a fine Chestnut Mare about fourteen Hands and a half high.

Sir Cred. Astonishing! [*Aside.*

Spec. Be not surpriz'd ; you will have her again if you will follow my Directions, and be expeditious in pursuit of her.

Sir Cred. I will ; proceed.

Spec. You must go easterly from your House about two Miles, and on the Left Hand is a small Coppice or Wood, in which, after you have advanced a few Paces, you will, I presume, find your Mare.

Sir Cred. Well, Doctor, your Kindness, when she's found, shall be gratefully acknowledg'd. Your humble Servant. — I will send a Messenger immediately,---and must desire your Company at my House, and I will make you an ample Satisfaction. [*Goes.*] Be expeditious.----

Stote. What Improvements do you make ! If you go on in this Way for a small Time longer, why, you'll certainly get a Place at Court.

Spec. At Court, say you, what should I do there ?

Stote. Poh, Poh, give Advice by guess ; there are few that do otherwise at this Time o' day. You may fill your Pockets before you'll be found out, and then you may keep yourself in. Come, come, away to *Sir Credulous* while the Business is warm.

Spec. Good truth, I'm afraid to go to *Sir Credulous's* House.

Stote.

and the Old Fox caught at last. 25

Stote. Afraid of what? to take Money for Business done? A bashful Countenance will do you no Service. Come, come, you won't be long gone, and I will do Business in your Absence, I'll warrant.

Spec. Well, I'll venture, for—

*'Tis not by Power of Art by which we shew
What e'er we please, and what we will we do.*

End of the First Act.



E

ACT



A C T II. S C E N E I.

A Room in Speculum's House.

Speculum and Stote sitting at a Table counting Money. Knocking at the Door. Stote peeps.

Stote. **T**IS old Madam *Loveit*. Put up the Cole, and she'll make an Addition to't.
[She enters leaning on her Maid's Shoulder.]

Spec. Your Servant, Madam *Loveit*, I see that Time or Years are no Hindrance to your rising early in a Morning.

M. Love. No, thank Heaven, my Age is not a Hindrance to me; but for my Husband. — You know, Doctor, that I have lately engaged myself in Wedlock again.

Spec. You are in the right on't, not to lie alone these cold Winter Nights; and what is most commendable, I am told that you have captivated the Affections of a young Man not two-and-twenty.

M. Love. I think he is not so much; but I had rather he was a little older: For I believe he is not yet come to his Manhood. But, Doctor, I am come to you once more for Information. Stand you aside, Huzzy. *[To Maid. She walks at a Distance.]*

Spec. Proceed, Madam.

M. Love. As I have had the Misfortune to be deprived of so many fine, handsome, jolly Men,—pray now, shall I bury this Husband?

Spec.

Spec. Let me see ; — I'm afraid —

[*Stote pulls him by the Elbow.*

Stote. Yes, yes, she will.

[*Aside.*

Spec. It can never be.

[*Aside.*

Stote. I tell you she will.

[*Aside.*

Spec. Really, Madam, to tell you the plain Truth ; ---- but I am sorry to be the Presager of such ill News to you, ——— You will bury him.

M. Love. How say you ? speak louder, for I have got a little Cold.

Spec. [*Speaks loud.*] You will bury him.

M. Love. Ha, say you so ? Well, what must be, must be ; but I'm resolv'd my next Husband shall not be what they call a Sportsman.

Stote aside. Who the Devil is to be her next ?

M. Love. Tho' 'tis so early, he has been gone from me these four Hours. At the Yelping of a Hound he turns out from me without the least Ceremony.

Spec. What Hour was it, pray ?

M. Love. Indeed I cannot tell, tho' I asked him. He said his Watch was down ; an old Excuse.

Spec. Perhaps you keep him short of Money.

M. Love. No, no, Doctor, I always thought the Labourer worthy of his Hire ; 'please to accept that.

[*Gives Money.*

Spec. Generous Soul ! 'tis a pity. --- *Stote* it will be a rare Job to make him a Cuckold. [*Aside.*

M. Lov. Ay, the whole County will say that of me : For when I married my first Husband, which is now fifty two Years ago, come the Time, I was then an Heiress of a considerable Fortune and Family ; and I generously threw my Person into the Arms of a smart young Fellow not worth a Groat. Well, [*Sighs*] a few Years carried him off. After his Decease I was resolved not to lessen his Merit by

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taking up with another; for really, to tell the Truth, if any Thing, I thought the second much handsomer and fitter for my Purpose,—as a Steward only—only as a Steward, Doctor.

Spec. To be sure, Madam.

M. Love. The Hand of Fate again interfered, and robb'd me of this Jewel. [Sighs.]

Spec. Ha! unfortunate Woman!

M. Love. I had just put on the Weed, and another shining Object presented itself to me. A fine, handsome, comely Man he was, and with the Perfections of the two former. Well, his engaging Speeches soon brought me to a Compliance.

Spec. Ay, Money, Madam, Money.

M. Love. No, no, not so; for you must know that my whole Fortune was settled so close to me that none of 'em cou'd touch it till my Decease.—

Spec. Then one may say, you are as valuable now as ever.

M. Love. I am so, only a little lame on one Foot,—but sound Wind and Limb,—Hum!—!—and no Brats to plague me.

Spec. Best of all.

M. Love. So, as I was saying, married we were; and he, poor Soul, was taken off in his Prime. Blooming and sprightly he was! and as sweet a Man as ever laid by Woman's Side. [Cries.]

Stote aside.] Matrimony did not agree with his Constitution. Odd, I won't undertake the Job; perhaps there's a Damp in the Coal-pit.

Spec. Well, Madam, come cheer your Spirits; I will venture to tell you, that you will once more be happier than ever in another Husband; for a Sportsman's Neck is often in Danger.

M. Love. Well, Heaven bless you, you have given me Comfort; but I must get home before this young Rake-hell comes from hunting; I may thank

thank myself for it, this is one of my own chusing. Ah! Murrain on these Dog-followers! a Woman is not so good as a Spaniel with 'em.

Spec. Come, Madam *Loveit*, be easy, the Time is coming.—

M. Love. Madam *Loveit*, ah, that Name is the worst I ever had; one may love it, but must go without it. Your humble Servant, Doctor.

[*Loveit and Maid going.*]

Will he break his Neck to-day think ye.

Spec. No, hardly so soon as that. [*They go.*
[*To Stote.*] How cou'd you oblige me to tell this old Fool such an improbable Story; she is almost four-score, and he a brisk young Fellow of two and twenty.

Stote. Ne'er mind Probabilities; People don't come to Conjurers to know what they knew before. I tell you 'twas the most favourable Thing you cou'd have told her.

Spec. Ay, but he won't die first.

Stote. So much the better, then she'll not come again to upbraid you for lying; and if he shou'd go first, then you'll be sure to retain a good Customer.

Spec. Well, if we are blown up in this County we must remove to another, and then you shall be Master, and I'll be Man.

Stote. Ay, so I intend. [*Aside.*] No, no, keep the Staff in your own Hand. [*A Knocking.*]

A Footman in a Livery enters.

Foot. Is the Doctor within?

Stote. Yes, he is.

Foot. Then give him this Letter.

Stote. Ay, Pox on this Way of Message by Letters; now our Clerk is scarcely stirring. [*Aside.*

SPR-

SPECULUM enters.

Spec. Who do you come from, Friend?

Foot. The Letter will inform you, Sir.

Spec. Why ay, but I have broke my Spectacles, and 'tis a very small Hand. Come, Friend, read it yourself, my Business is no Secret.

Foot. I must ask your Pardon, Sir, I am not so high learn'd.

Stote. Give it to me, and step you into the next Room, Friend, and warm yourself; 'tis no Disgrace in *Cheshire* not to read.

Spec. No, no; for *Nixon*, the most wonderful *Cheshire* Prophet, cou'd not tell great *A*.—No more can I. [*Aside.*] Come, step to the Fire, 'tis a cold Morning. [*Footman goes.*]

Stote. I'll run up Stairs to *Damaris*, and she'll read it in a Whiff. If it had had any Money in't, I cou'd have read it myself. [*Going.*]

DAMARIS enters.

Why, what do'st lie in Bed so long for, *Damaris*? Here has been Business stirring for this Hour past. There, read that Letter. [*She reads.*]

Dear Doctor,

I Understand Sir Thomas intends to pay you a Visit, to gain an Intelligence concerning some secret Transactions of mine; therefore if you behave well in the Affair, I shall make you an ample Satisfaction so soon as I can steal privately to your House.

I am your very Humble Servant,

FELITIA CAVALIER.

P.S. You may give my Servant an Answer, as you know how.

Spec.

Spec. As I know how!

Stote. Ay, as you know how. Well, leave that Answer to me; get you gone. [*They go, Stote goes to the Room Door.*] Come hither Friend, [*Servant enters*] you must tell your Lady that the poor Man has been here already, and has got his Cow again, without the least Damage; and the Doctor's Service to her Ladyship.

Serv. Very well, I will, Sir.

[*Exit.*]

SPECULUM returns.

Spec. Thou art a very Miracle! Talk of Learning? Hang Learning, it's a starving Trade at best: I had rather have thy Knowledge than be a Counsellor, a Bishop, a Justice o'Peace, nay a Lord Chancellor. Why for writing now, there are a many Disadvantages tack'd to it; it has brought many a Scholar to the Pillory.—Another Thing, supposing you and I were in a Plot. [*Whispers.*] Ha, ha, ha, who cou'd unriddle that now; there is no seizing of Papers; and again. [*Whispers.*] Ha, there's a Piece of News! If I was to write that down, who knows the Consequence, ha! ha! Why no one that cou'd write wou'd pretend to conjure.

Stote. And I wonder any one that can write wou'd come to a Conjuror.

Spec. Why ay, *Stote*; but there are two Sorts of People throughout the World, wise Men and Fools.

Stote. Fools and wise Men you shou'd ha' said, for I have seen a Nobleman's Footman wiser than his Lordship, a Country Curate wiser than the Rector, a Merry-Andrew wiser than a Quack-Doctor, and a Prime Minister wiser than a——

Spec. Whist! whist! Sirrah, it's a Mercy you can't write, for you wou'd certainly be an Author, and write Treason.

Stote.

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Stote. Ay, many a Shopkeeper has paid for his Knowledge, by writing a Man of Quality's Name over and over in his Shop-Book.

Spec. We can count ready Money as well as the best of 'em, *Stote*, ha!

Stote. And arn't at the Charge of Books and Book-keepers. [*Knocking.*]

Enter Lady CAVALIER, and Miss FIDGET in a Riding-Dress, almost like a Man's Apparel.

L. Cav. So, Mr. *Speculum*, I met my Servant with your obliging Message, and have been as early as possible to pay my Compliment. Please to accept this small Acknowledgment. [*Gives Money.*]

Spec. Ah, your Ladyship is too generous. Not but that I served you to my utmost Skill, for Sir *Thomas* had ocular Demonstration.

L. Cav. How! ocular Demonstration say you, of what?

Spec. He only viewed you over and over, and your Spark too, in naked Bed together, at four o'Clock in the Morning; nay, farther, he saw his Cap, Wig, Coat, &c. hanging on a Chair-back.

L. Cav. How say you, at four o'Clock in the Morning? what Morning?

Spec. But Yesterday Morning, and had not the Hand of Providence interfered, you had neither of you lived to see the Day-light.

L. Cav. Dear Doctor, inform me of the whole of this Affair! [*Trembling.*]

Spec. Know then, that Sir *Thomas* crept home unexpected at that Time.---You'll keep the Secret?

L. Cav. Upon my Honour I will.

Spec. The Reason, as he informed me, was a Quarrel he had engaged himself in at his Mistress's House,

House, with a certain young Gentleman of this County, by whom he was disarm'd of his Sword; so had the Opportunity of pausing a-while, turn'd about, and went out again undiscover'd from his House, but with a Resolution to take a Revenge another Way.

L. Cav. Oh unguarded Fate! This very Lady was the Person in Bed with me, who came unexpected to pay me a Visit, and these are the Clothes that hung on the Chair-back.

Spec. What a Fool was I not to see that. [*Aside.*] Why ay, my Lady, I knew it was a Female; indeed I did not tell him so, but I told him that which was as much for your Service; for I persuaded him that he was so fuddled that his Eyes saw double, and that he wrong'd the most virtuous Lady in the whole County by his own base Proceedings: Therefore, dear Lady, if you will leave the whole Affair to me, I will undertake to reform him, and make him as good a Husband as any in the County of *Cheshire*. [*To Miss Fidget.*] And for you, Madam, let me request you to lay aside this mimick Dress till you go to a Masquerade, and there perhaps you may make a proper Use of it.

Miss Fid. I will take your Advice, and Thanks to indulgent Heaven for this happy Deliverance. With your Ladyship's Leave, I'll step home and undress.

L. Cav. Ay, with all my Heart, my Dear.

Spec. No, let me request the Favour that you go together, to Sir *Credulous Plyant's* House; he is a Man of Honour, and to whom I would have you relate the whole Affair; he has an Influence over Sir *Thomas*, and, no doubt, will take proper Measures to make you easy. I shall be there myself immediately.

F

L. Cav.

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Lady Cav. Then we'll go directly. Your Humble Servant. [*They go.*]

Spec. Good Truth, I dare not go. —

Stote. Then I shall drive you: Come, come along, no more Excuses.

SCENE *Changes. A Room in Sir Credulous Plyant's House.*

Sir John Foxchace, Sir Thomas Cavalier, and several Sportsmen sitting at a Table smoking and drinking.

Sir John. I Never knew a Company of Sportsmen met together, but the first Toast began with a Song. [*To 2d Gent.*] Come, Sir, do you begin.

2d Gent. Ah lack! *Sir John*, you have pitched on the worst Proficient in the whole Company.

Sir John. I am sure you sat the Dogs on with a most melodious Tone.

Sir Tho. He who can do that, can sing a Hunter's Song.

Sir John. Come, come, one with a Chorus; I love the Cry of a full Pack: My Huntsman shall help you out. [*To Servant.*] Bid him come in; and drink about, Gentlemen. [*They all drink.*]

Huntsman enters, with a French-Horn, and a Hare tied to his Girdle.

Now, Sir.

2d Gent. Well, *Sir John*, I will do my best. *Sings to the Horn.*

*How the Poets of old, strange Stories have told,
When Englishmen fought in bright Armour;
But I'm of a Race that loves a Fox-chace,
And to sport o'er the Grounds of a Farmer.*

What

and the old Fox caught at last. 35

What Musick's so sweet, as the Hounds when we meet,

With a Halloo from each merry Fellow?

How glowing's the Heart, when the Game we do start?

Then how sweetly our Voices grow mellow!

When the Hounds are at fault, our Courage we halt,
Until we recover agen:

Our Dogs how we cheer, when the Game we come near;

At the Death how we cherish 'em then.

Hark too, &c.

Sir John. Excellently done! His Voice has the Harmony of a whole Pack of Dogs. Why this is living like Sportsmen: Who would be a Prince, if he was debarr'd from this Pleasure?

Sir Tho. Ay, or from any other Pleasures: A good Boxing-Match, a Cudgel-Playing, a Wrestling, or a Cock-Match; these are Sports for you!

Sir John. Our Chace was smart for the Time; but methinks *Clamira* and my Son were soon flung out.

Sir Tho. Perhaps they did not care to follow such low Game.

3d Gent. They love to hunt in Couples, and were willingly flung out, I believe; for as I kept on the File, I saw them take a quite different Way, and that immediately after the Dogs were in Cry.

Sir John. The Devil you did! ---Well, let *Jack* alone; for if Women will, they will. ---Why there's many a good Horse enter'd at the Post: But she'll not marry, I am assured of that.

3d Gent. How come you to think so, *Sir John*?

Sir John. I know it to be so: For while you went up Stairs to *Jack*, I pump'd the young
F 2 Huffy

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Huffey to the Quick, and sounded her Pulse in every Respect; that is, as to Matrimony. Why, 'tis her Aversion; and, I can tell you, her Love is too close rivetted to Dogs and Horses, to love any thing else.

3d Gent. Excuse me, Sir *John*, for calling your Judgment in question.

Sir John. Now, to confirm what I have said, she takes Mankind to be Carrion; and I went so far as to try how she would kiss.

3d Gent. Ah! did you so, Sir *John*; you have a Colt's Tooth left.

Sir John. Not for that;---now you are waggish.

3d Gent. And how does she kiss?

Sir John. Sweet, sweet i'faith! her Breath smelt like a young Fawn's: I had like to have told her so.

3d Gent. And what did she tell you?

Sir John. In plain Terms she told me, she had rather have given a Kiss to her Horse. [*The Company laugh.*] Now, if she had been in Love with my Son, do you think she would have given such an Answer to his Father?

1st Gent. All this comes to no Proof; for I know that she loves him, and he loves her; and 'tis my Opinion they are gone to be married.

Sir John. If you knew that, why did you advise me to let him go out?

1st Gent. Because if you had not comply'd with his going out, he would have gone without your Leave.

Sir John. How, Sir; do you say my Boy is disobedient? He never gave me a Mis-look in his Life, and much less to be disobedient to me. Now you say my Boy is gone to be married to *Clamira*: Come, I'll hold you a hundred Guineas to a China Orange on't. [*Gets up in a Passion.*

Enter

Enter Sir CREDULOUS and Mr. LOVEIT.

Sir Cred. Hold, hold, *Sir John*, *Mr. Loveit* and I have laid a Wager will make you all merry ; and for your Son—Oh, here's his Companion, and I presume he is not far off ; there's no need of your laying Wagers.

Enter CLAMIRA singing.

The brisk Chace when over——

Clam. So, Gentlemen, you have kill'd I see ; and I heard you had excellent Sport while it held.

Sir John. Ay, and you are an excellent Manager, arn't you?—

Clam. Hold, hold, *Sir John*, pay your Debts first, and then complain of the Bargain.—Come, give me the Kiss you owe me. [*The Company laugh.*] Nay, you're not a Man of Honour if you won't pay your Debts,—Come.—

Sir John kisses her. There take it.

Clam. Jack, come in you shame-faced Rogue. [*Young Foxchace enters.*] There, Sir, if you please, give your Son the Interest you promis'd me.

[*They kneel.*]

T. Foxc. Your Blessing, Sir.

Sir John. How! Is it so in Fact? Well, bless you both! [*raising them.*] Come, my Girl, I'll kiss you again. I have no Fault to find ; but I fear I shan't have either of you long, for I suppose you'll 'break both your Necks 'ere this Hunting-Season's over.

Clam. No, Sir, my Chace is ended, and never more will I follow that Exercise, but take up with those which are more becoming to my present Circumstances.—

Sir John. Better still.—

Clam. And as to your Son, Sir, I have made him Master of my whole Fortune, without the least Reserve to myself.

Sir

Sir John. Hast thou so, my Dear? Then I will endeavour to make you a Settlement worthy of so generous an Act; his All shall be yours.

[*The Company all compliment.*]

1 *Gent.* Now, *Sir John*, did not I tell you what was doing?

T. Foxc. to 1st Gent. Then you wou'd have prevented it.

1 *Gent.* No, Dear *Jack*, excuse me, I was a Principal in forwarding it, and said not a Word till I knew 'twas too late for any one to prevent it, and then not unseasonably.

Sir John. Gentlemen, as I believe this Company is compos'd of Friends, let's spend the Day in Mirth, and he that won't be merry let him forever quit the Acquaintance of *Jack Foxc.* Here! [*Calls, Servant enters.*] haste away to your Lady, and bid her forthwith order an Entertainment for a Princess.

Sir Cred. With your Leave, *Sir John*, that shall be my Business; for as this good Fortune has happened while at my House, I shall insist that no one of this Company stirs from hence, under a Penalty of six Bottles to his Share, and then let him walk off as soon as he pleases. In the mean Time I will order my Coach and Six to bring your Lady hither, of which News to her I desire that I may be the Messenger.

Sir John. It shall be so.

Sir Cred. But first, [*to Servant*] bring the Pye hither, and bid the Doctor come in. [*Exit Servant.*] I shall surprize you all presently. [*Speculum enters.*] Well, Doctor *Speculum*, I have been so fill'd with Wonder and Amazement of your Knowledge in Astrology and Second-sight,——

Spec. aside. Ah, my Course is at an End, I'm afraid.

That

Sir Cred. That I have ventured to lay no small Wager on your Account. I have recover'd my Mare exactly to a Point as you told me. [*A Pye is brought in and set on the Table.*] There, Doctor, 'tis only to tell what is contained in the Inside of this Pye.

Spec. Ah, dear Sir! I have no proper Materials to answer Questions of this Sort; beside, I have not my Book, but I will step home and fetch it. [*Going.*]

Mr. Love. No, no, Sir, I insist on your telling immediately, or the Wager's lost.

Sir Cred. to Spec. Pho! you can answer such a trifling Question as this without a Book.—Come, do it instantly, give an Answer only what is contained in the Inside of this Pye?

Spec. pausing. I wish I had not come.— [*Aside.*]

Sir Cred. What say you, Doctor? I'll hold double the Sum that he knows as well as I do.

Spec. scratching his Head, and sighing. Why then, to own the whole Truth, — I say, *The old Fox is caught at last.* Hum! [*Meaning himself.*]

Sir Cred. clapping Spec. on the Shoulder. Right, right, I have won the Wager; 'tis a Fox, 'tis a Fox. [*The Company laugh.*]

Mr. Love. I don't deny that I have lost the Wager; but thou art no Fox to pledge so much Faith on such a Fellow.

Sir Tho. Ha, ha, ha! he has done it right. Ha, ha, ha! [*Jumping about.*]

Enter Lady CAVALIER.

L. Cav. So, Sir Thomas, I think I have found you in the Height of your Jollity. Are you not ashamed of yourself? You have not been within your own Doors these six Days.

Sir Tho. Ay, but it is not six Nights, Madam; for I had a Sight of you and your Gallant, and have

have ordered a Bill into Parliament for a Divorce—
and I'll go through with it. *[Reeling—*

The Company shew Tokens of Surprise.
But before that, Zounds, I'll castrate the Villain.
[In a Passion.] Wounds, the Cavaliers were always
noted for their Courage.—Let me go. *[Reels.*

L. Cav. Ungenerous Man! you know I never
gave you Cause to suspect my Incontinency; 'tis a
vile Invention of some of your Mistresses.—

Sir Tho. No, Madam, with these Eyes I saw
you in naked Bed with your Fellow; I knew him
well, *[biccups]* 'twas a young Bedfellow, one whom
you all know;—but he shall be better known when
I sue him for Damages,

L. Cav. Be not so rash and positive in an Affair
of such Consequence.

Sir Tho. Consequence indeed! *Sir Thomas, Cavalier*
will have Summons enough against next *Horn-*
Fair-Day.—Odd, I'll go find him out this Minute.

[Offers to go.
Sir Cred. Hold, hold, *Sir Thomas*, this is a
phrensical Notion of yours; I am sure it can't be
so. What say you, Doctor, is it so or not?

Spec. I aver 'tis a Mistake,—'twas a Female.—

Sir Cred. Look you there now,—it was a Fe-
male;—I wou'd swear it if he says so.

Sir Tho. A Female! a Devil more likely; I
saw his Wig, Cap, Coat, &c. hanging upon a
Chair-back, and know the Clothes to belong to
young—

L. Cav. Come, come, good *Sir Thomas*, cou'd
you know the Person and Clothes again if you saw
them?

Sir Tho. Know 'em, ay, from all in the World
beside. *[Lady Cav. goes out.*

Spec. I'll answer for your Lady's Innocence.
Sir Tho.

Sir Tho. Conjuring Dog! be gone, thou lyeſt; you have deceived me before. [*Offers to go.*]
What, I ſaw double, did I?

Lady CAVALIER returns with *Miss FIDGET.*

Miss Fid. Your Servant, *Sir Thomas.*

Sir Tho. Heaven preſerve me! what my Couſin *Fidget.*

Miss Fid. Ay, Sir, 'twas I that you ſaw in Bed with your Lady.---

Sir Tho. 'Egad, I believe it was, and theſe the very Clothes; but do you wear a Wig?

Miss Fid. Yes, I do, *Sir Thomas*, but 'tis only a *Tête de Mouton*; you ſhall be ſure on't.

[*Pulls it off.*]

Sir Tho. *Tête de Mouton*! A-pox on theſe *French* Faſhions; the *Engliſh* will be ruin'd by 'em at laſt; we ſhan't know one Sex from another but by feeling.

Sir Cred. Now who is the Conjuror, *Sir Thomas*?

Sir Tho. I aſk your Pardon; and for you, my Dear, [*to his Lady*] forget my paſt Failures, and never more will I give you Cauſe to complain of me.

[*Kiſſing her.*]

L. Cav. Ay, with all my Heart.—

Spec. aſide to Lady Cav. Did not I tell you I wou'd make him a good Husband?

Sir John. So, ſo, why here will be rare Doings to-night,—a double Wedding. Well! Joy and Mirth's the Word; we will be all hunted down to-night, that's poſ.

Sir Tho. Well, *Mr. Loveit*, you'll let us ſend for your Spouſe to partake; you arn't afraid of her having another Bedfellow in your Abſence.

Mr. Love. She won't be ſtirring theſe four Hours.

Spec. I ſay ſhe has been ſtirring and up for theſe four Hours paſt, I'll lay any Wager.

Mr. Love. Thou Impoſtor! done for five Pieces.

Sir Cred. And I'll back him for 100 if he ſays it.

Mr. Love. Done, and that shall be prov'd by and by.

Sir Cred. Come, my Butler shall give us one Dance. Play the *Cheshire Rounds*. Bid him come in. [*They all sit. Butler comes in and dances.*

[*All rise, and come forward.*

A Noise without. Bring him along.

Constable enters leading Stote. Butcher, Countrymen, and several others following.

Sir John. What's the Meaning of this?

Butch. Only the famous Conjuror, an't please your Worship, who is found out to be the greatest Thief and Robber in the whole County.

Spec. Ha! what *Stote*,---then I'll make the best of my Way. [*Aside.*] [*Going.*

Butch. Hold, Sir, you are as deep in the Roguery as he. [*Seizes him. The Company surprized.*

Sir John. What Charge do you give?

Butch. An't please your Worship, a few Nights ago I lost two Lambs out of my Fold; so I goes to this damn'd Scoundrel of a Conjuror to know if he cou'd help me to them again, and he promis'd me he wou'd; but in going home I met these two honest Neighbours, who inform'd me that they saw both Master and Man at twelve o'Clock at Night take each of them one upon his Shoulder, and they follow'd 'em home to their own House with 'em.

Countrym. Ay, and my Pig went the same Way. —You need not to raise the Devil to know where it is. [*strutting up to Spec.*] Ah lack, I won't be too bold neither.

Sir Job. What can you say for yourself, Mr. Doctor?

Spec. Say to it? I say 'tis false.

Sir Cred. I say so too; 'tis all false and erroneous, and they are very honest Conjurors.—'Tis a Gift.—

Butch. A Gift, Sir *Credulous*; I'll swear I never gave them to 'em. I Evid.

1 *Evid.* I saw them both steal the Lambs.

2 *Evid.* And I, an't please your Worship, saw them too.

Sir Cred. Well, perhaps his Man might be a Rogue.

Stote. Who I, *Sir Credulous*? No, I'll prove my Master to be a greater Rogue than myself.

Spec. Sirrah, hold your Tongue, or—

Stote. But I won't, Sir; and I'll make myself an Evidence.

Sir Cred. So, so! fine Doings, indeed.

Stote. Ay, *Sir Credulous*, I'll prove that he stole your Mare out of the Stable.

Sir Tho. Fine conjuring, indeed; perhaps the Villain was himself in Bed with my Wife.

[*Aside to Loveit.*

Love. to Sir Tho. Or with mine, as he pretends to know so well her Time of rising.

Stote. Gentlemen, to confirm him a Cheat, do but try his Scholarship; he can't tell one Letter in the Alphabet, for all he's Master of so many Books.

Sir John. Why, that's a fashionable Method; for there are many wise Gentlemen who buy abundance of Greek Books, and don't know a Word of the Contents of 'em. Come hither, *Speculum*, [*pulls out a Book*] here, read a Verse or two, and set his Evidence aside.

[*Speculum looking on the Book.*

Stote. If he knows one Word then I'll take the Blame of all.

Sir Cred. Come, Doctor, read away.---

Stote. No, no, he's broke his Spectacles, that was always his Excuse; and if any one wou'd lend him a Pair, they must be such as wou'd read of themselves.

L. Cav. to Miss Fid. What a Fool have I been to write Letters to such a Fellow! I warrant they have been carried over half the Parish to be read.

Sir Cred. But how cou'd he tell what Cattle every one had lost? He did not steal all that were lost in
the

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the whole County ; -- for I am told he never fail'd telling that at first Sight.

Stote. Then I'll inform you. You must know that it was my Business to pump it out of all Corners, what Cattle they had lost, and then I rung a particular Bell, as he had all Sorts ; one for a Cow, another for a Horse, another for a Hog, and so on ; by which means he gave a ready Intelligence to all the Minute he appeared to 'em. *[The Company surprised.]*

Sir John. Come, now read away, or you're detected.

Spec. throws the Book down. Why, then I do confess I cannot read.

Mr. Love. Ha, ha, ha ! *Sir Credulous,* The old Fox is indeed caught at last, and here he is.

[Laying bold of Spec.]

Sir Cred. To know Mankind, Man's Life is much too short.

Sir John. 'Tis confirm'd, -- take them away till a farther Examination.

Spec. Gentlemen, if you will shew me your Favour, I will inform you of every Artifice made use of by me and other Conjurers, to draw the Unwary in, and deceive the World, which may prove of greater Use in this County than you perhaps imagine.

Sir John. Well, take him away, and keep him secure till another Opportunity. *[they go out.]* Now, my Friends, as the Pursuit of Mirth is to be this Day's Business, with your Leave, *Sir Credulous,* we'll adjourn to another Room, and follow it closely. And that all may partake, my own Doors shall be kept open so long as there is any Liquor in the Cellar!

*Whatever Sages say, give Children Scope,
And as you've train'd them up, so place your Hope ;
If well inclin'd, they'll nobly play their Part,
And act what's best to win a Parent's Heart.*

F I N I S.



